



MILFORD AREA MEDIATION PROGRAM

~2004 REPORT~

The Milford Area Mediation Program offers mediation services to residents of the greater Milford area. This area includes Milford and the towns and villages just west and north of town. The funding for this program is provided by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with Hillsborough County 6% Incentive Fund Program and surrounding participating towns. Milford residents are the largest dollar and in-kind donators to the program. During this year, funding sources have also included unsolicited donations from individuals and a grant from the Kaley Fund. The program has been in existence for thirteen years.

Mediation helps solve conflicts in ways that fit the needs and values of each party in the mediation. By uncovering the causes of conflicts, mediation can reduce family stress, improve family relations and increase positive communication among family members, reduce juvenile court involvement, and encourage high school completion by teenagers. Examples of areas of conflict that families have turned to Milford Area Mediation for help in successfully solving include: general family disagreements, adolescent runaways, parenting, school related concerns, adjustments to changes in families, pre-delinquent behavior, teenage independence, responsibility, and truancy.

The program primarily provides family mediation, but also provides other types of mediation such as divorce mediation on request. The volunteer mediators in the program have completed at least 45 hours of training and are supervised by a Master's level mediator. The mediators are offered in-service workshops and conferences throughout the year.

During the grant year 2003 - 2004 volunteers provided mediation services to two hundred and five residents living in Amherst, Francestown, Greenfield, Greenville, Hillsborough, Milford, New Ipswich, Peterborough and Temple. Of those served, one hundred and thirty two were juveniles from 61 families. 12 divorce cases were also mediated. Referrals to the program came from six police departments, four school districts, one district court, and several human services agencies.

Additionally, the program coordinator worked to aggressively refer and match clients with secondary agencies, schools, and providers in the area. As a result of this intensive work, some unique services have been offered to adolescents. We have obtained funding and grants for therapeutic horseback riding classes, scholarships for classes and sliding scale rates for counseling services. No charge consultation for the program continues to be provided by a Nashua based licensed social worker.

Without the support and belief in our work from the agencies, police departments, individuals and taxpayers, Milford Area Mediation would not be able to continue to offer mediation services to area residents. I am thankful for the generosity of the individuals

and groups who continue with their enthusiastic support of Milford Area Mediation. I encourage that continued support.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen E. Fitzpatrick, MS
Program Coordinator
Milford Area Mediation